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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 003022

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SY](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: NSC SEPTEMBER 14 REVIEWS NINEWA SECURITY  
OPERATIONS AND DIYALA RECONSTRUCTION PLANNING

REF: BAGHDAD 02933

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S/REL MCFI) Summary: Deputy Prime Minister (D/PM) Barham Salih chaired the September 14 meeting of the Iraqi National Security Council (I-NSC). The Council heard short follow-up reports from the MOD on Civil-Military Operations Centers, from the MOI on continued difficulties in securing funds from the Minister of Finance for the Oil Protection Police, and a brief review of a weapons permit law. In detail, the Council reviewed the outbreak of cholera, which the Minister of Health considered serious but not alarming, and ongoing security operations in Ninewa, which are progressing carefully and steadily. The Council also heard and responded to a long description of the planning for reconstruction in Diyala thus far. The National Security Advisor informed the Council that Babil Province would be ready for Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) about October 23. D/PM Salih concluded the Council meeting with expressions of thanks and appreciation to Commanding General (CG) MNF-I General David Petraeus. End Summary.

Take These Walls Down, Please  
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¶2. (S/REL MCFI) Before the follow-up of last week's action items, D/PM Barham Salih reminded the Council that the PM had suggested at previous I-NSC meetings that the T-walls be removed from areas where security conditions allowed. He noted that would require repairs and improvements to the streets of those areas. The D/PM requested the MOD address this issue at the next Crisis Action Cell meeting.

Civil Military Operations Centers  
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¶3. (S/REL MCFI) MOD Abdel Qadr expressed his support for the formation of Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) to organize and implement reconstruction efforts in areas following security operations, as he had done last week (reftel). D/PMs Dr. Rafi Isawi and Barham Salih then exchanged views on next steps, agreeing that efforts at reconstruction to date have been grossly insufficient. MOD Qadr observed that MNF-I had used a CMOC in Fallujah with outstanding results. Summing up the Council's continued frustration with the lack of reconstruction progress, D/PM Salih noted that the reconstruction efforts needed to be planned, coordinated, and implemented to the same degree as the military operations that preceded reconstruction efforts. D/PM Isawi noted that such efforts need to be funded to be effective, and D/PM Salih responded that there would be a written order to the cabinet to direct funding and have the new CMOC or reconstruction committee answer to the D/PM,s staff.

Oil Police Still Lacks Funding  
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¶4. (S/REL MCFI) MOI Bolani complained that the Ministry of Finance was only funding the Oil Police transferred to the Ministry of Interior from the Ministry of Oil effective January 2009. Showing frustration with this issue that the Council settled on August 31, D/PM Barham Salih noted Bolani's concerns and stated that the issue did not need to be complicated. (Note: Minister of Finance Jabr was absent from the September 14 meeting. End note.)

#### Countering Assassinations

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¶5. (S/REL MCFI) Minister of State for National Security Affairs (MSNS) Shirwan Wa'eli asked to defer follow-up discussion on the recent spike in assassinations (reftel) due to the absence of the Baghdad Operations Center Commander General Aboud. Wa'eli added that MOI's counter-measures were being implemented.

#### Weapons Permit Law

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¶6. (S/REL MCFI) The MOI introduced a proposed law to regulate weapons ownership, control the issuance of licenses, and centralize the database tracking weapon licenses. After a somewhat lengthy discourse by the MOI and the MSNS, D/PM Salih noted that the proposed law should move forward as no one on the NSC opposed it.

#### Cholera: Endemic, not Epidemic

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¶7. (S/REL MCFI) Minister of Health (MOH) Dr. Hasnawi reported that there were 73 confirmed cases of cholera in Iraq this year. There were also 124 suspected cases - he believed some of these would be confirmed. The main cause is contaminated water supply, he added, calling for government efforts to improve supplies of clean water and proper disposal of sewage.

¶8. (S/REL MCFI) Responding to National Security Advisor (NSA) Dr. Rubaie's questions, he indicated that the number of cases was well below that of an epidemic, but the media is alarmist. Cholera is endemic to parts of Iraq he noted, repeating his calls for better sanitation. The MSNS and the Minister of Justice both agreed that the water and sewage systems needed rehabilitation, observing that drinking water was safe as it left the treatment facilities but became fouled in the pipes.

¶9. (S/REL MCFI) Commanding General of MNF-I GEN David Petraeus noted that the number of confirmed cases was down from last year and that many of the suspected cases turned out to be diarrhea. Safe drinking water is more abundant in Baghdad, in large part due to the availability of chlorine for purification as well as water treatment plants operating at about 75 percent, much higher than last year.

¶10. (S/REL MCFI) Regarding the alarmist media stories, GEN Petraeus counseled the GoI to get the truth out first, advising them to be fully honest but also to be the first with the truth and that a coordinated media plan would defeat bad actors' disinformation and inadvertent misinformation. Taking the point, NSA Dr. Rubaie suggested the GoI form a media team to monitor and respond to misleading stories on a 24 hour a day basis. GEN Petraeus then reiterated the importance of getting out the truth first and offered the assistance of MNF-I's Media Operations Center to the GoI.

#### Ninewa Operations

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¶11. (S/REL MCFI) MOD Qadr briefly outlined the next steps in

security operations in Ninewa province. Intelligence gathering and planning would take place from September 15 through October 15. In the latter half of this period, troops would be placed into position for operations to commence October 15. National Police would also be involved in the operations and were already part of the planning. Five Iraqi Army (IA) divisions would ultimately be involved in the operations, first in Ninewa, then in Salah ad Din.

¶12. (S/REL MCFI) GEN Petraeus commended the MOD and MOI for a well-developed plan, noting it was comprehensive and deliberate, building on lessons learned from the Diyala operations. In particular, he lauded the incorporation of the National Police into joint planning for operations with the IA. He counseled the GOI's Ministers to maintain strict operational security (OPSEC) on its plans, reminding them that criminal elements and terrorists had escaped from other areas when forewarned of impending Iraqi Security Forces' (ISF) operations. There should be no press statements before the operations begin and the commanders should consider starting operations early. He also called for outreach to the local population and the tribal sheikhs, noted that this had proved successful in the past.

¶13. (S/REL MCFI) D/PM acknowledged the points made and called for coordination with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG).

#### Diyala Reconstruction Planning

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¶14. (S/REL MCFI) Dr. Thamir al-Zubaidi, reconstruction coordinator for Diyala province, gave a long review of reconstruction efforts in Diyala, which included an eight minute video showing examples of destruction in Diyala. GEN Petraeus noted that most of the destruction of building in Diyala was by Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), often with booby traps left behind as they fled impending attacks from the ISF. This was a tactic of the Saddam Fedayeen that AQI had adopted; they also rigged booby traps in schools. He cited this activity to underline the need for OPSEC, reiterating his call for no publicity as operations get underway in Ninewa and Salah ad Din.

¶15. (S/REL MCFI) Dr. Thamir reported that the Diyala reconstruction committee began functioning on August 12 and had held two meetings with representatives of different Ministries, excepting MOD and MOF. He further reported that as of September 11 he had received bids on projects from 144

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companies, but owing to a lack of funds in local accounts, no contracts had been signed. On learning that no projects had actually begun, D/PM Salih said he would intervene with the MOF to resolve the funding issue.

¶16. (S/REL MCFI) Dr. Thamir expressed concern for the safety and security of his committee members and ministry representatives in moving between Baghdad and Diyala. The NSA suggested that the committee members re-locate temporarily to Diyala, staying there until they had expended on projects the 100 million dollars of reconstruction funds. This would allow them to learn the real needs of the people of Diyala. D/PM Isawi asked that once projects are contracted, the coordinator provide the I-NSC with a report detailing the type of projects funded and their location within the province.

#### Babil PIC, and Beyond

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¶17. (S/REL MCFI) The NSA reported that Babil Province is considered ready to pass from MNF-I to Provincial Iraqi Control for security responsibilities. A ceremony marking transfer to PIC is tentatively planned for October 23. GEN Petraeus noted Wasit Province was expected to follow soon after Babil, adding that the MOI was aware of the shortages

that still needed to be rectified in Wasit prior to the transfer of security responsibilities there. Dr. Rubaie added that he expects all provinces to attain PIC before the end of the year. GEN Petraeus interjected that several provinces are not going to meet the criteria for PIC before the end of the year, specifying Salah ad Din, Ninewa, and Diyala as unlikely to be ready for PIC by December 2008. He also noted that the PIC process has served usefully to induce the MOD and MOI to undertake needed improvements.

Thanks to General Petraeus

18. (SBU) D/PM Barham Salih concluded the Council meeting by noting that this was the last meeting that GEN Petraeus would attend. He called GEN Petraeus an American hero and expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation for all that the General had done on behalf of the Iraqi people, stating that history would call him an Iraqi patriot. He congratulated GEN Petraeus for leading the surge of Coalition Forces that had turned the corner for the security of the Iraqi nation and promised that the Iraqis would see to it that his efforts and the sacrifices of Coalition Forces were not in vain. GEN Petraeus thanked Salih, stating that it had been a privilege to serve with the other Council members.

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